

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 00931 210726Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CPR-02 H-02 SS-15 /032 W
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O 210640Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3385

UNCLAS PORT MORESBY 0931

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, BP
SUBJECT: SOLOMON ISLAND DELEGATION VISIT TO PNG

REF: PORT MORESBY 0910

1. EMB IS ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE LOGISTICS FOR BOTH ONE AND TWO DAY TRIPS PROPOSED IN REFTTEL. ONE DAY TRIP WOULD BE TO VILLAGE OUTSIDE OF POPONDETTA. THERE ARE FOUR OR FIVE OTHER VILLAGES WITHIN ONE-HALF HOUR OF MISSION. DELEGATION COULD VISIT TRADITIONAL HOUSES, OBEERVE PREPARATION OF GARDENS AND PROBABLY PARTICIPATE IN A TRADITIONAL FEAST (MUMU). VILLAGES FIRST CONTACT WITH EUROPEANS WAS ROUGHLY 70-80 YEARS AGO. FIRST MISSION WAS NOT ESTABLISHED UNTIL 1962, HOWEVER. STILL VERY REMOTE AND INTERESTING PLACE. IF POSSIBLE, WOULD TAKE C130 TO POPONDETTA AND THEN SHUTTLE TO SMALLER AIRSTRIP USING CESSNA 206 (5-6 PASSENGER PLANE). FROM SECOND AIRSTRIP TO MISSION IS 45 MIN. WALK.

2. TWO DAY TRIP TO NOMAD IS LOGISTICALLY MUCH MORE DIFFICULT BUT ALSO MUCH MORE PRIMITIVE. MISSIONARY IS PNG ANTHROPOLOGIST WHO COULD PROVIDE MUCH INFO. IT IS REPORTED THAT SOME VILLAGES NEAR MISSION WERE STILL PRACTICING CANNIBALISM 10 YEARS AGO. VISIT WOULD INVOLVE OVERNIGHT STAY AT MISSION AND PERHAPS A TRADITIONAL CEREMONY (SING SING AND/OR MUMU). WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE USE OF C130 IF COSTS ARE TO BE KEPT REASONABLE. SUGGEST
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C130 FLY TO DARU AND TRANSFER AT DARU TO TWO LIGHTER PLANES WHICH WOULD FLY TO NOMAD. FROM NOMAD CESSNA 206 WOULD MAKE 3 OR FIVE MINUTE FLIGHTS SHUTTILING PASSENGERS TO SMALLER AIRSTRIP 5 MILES AWAY. FROM THERE, ONE-HALF HOUR WALK TO VILLAGE. IF DELEGATION ARRIVED PORT MORESBY BEFORE NOON ON JULY 3 THEY COULD ARRIVE MISSION BEFORE DARK. DELEGATION WOULD SPEND 4TH AT MISSION AND LEAVE

LATE AFTERNOON FOR DARU AND PORT MORESBY. OFFICIAL CALLS ON GPNG OFFICIALS COULD THEN BE MADE MORNING OF 5TH. ALTERNATIVE IS TO SPEND EVENING JULY 3 IN PORT MORESBY WITH OFFICIAL CALLS MADE AFTERNOON 3RD. VERY EARLY MORNING ON 4TH, PLANE WOULD PROCEED TO DARU AND THEN NOMAD, SPENDING ALL AFTERNOON AND EVENING AT MISSION. PLANE WOULD THEN DEPART MISSION EARLY ON JULY 5 REACHING PORT MORESBY BEFORE NOON AND THEN PROCEEDING IMMEDIATELY TO HONIARA. DELEGATION SHOULD BE AWARE THAT EITHER ALTERNATIVE FOR THE TWO-DAY TRIP IS LIKELY TO BE QUITE TIRING.

3. WE MUST HAVE FIRM DECISION BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS JUNE 26. IF WE ARE GIVEN AFFIRMATIVE DECISION WHICH IS SUBSEQUENTLY REVERSED, THERE WILL BE CHARGES OF AROUND \$600 FOR ADVANCE PREPARATIONS WHICH DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE.
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